THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) The details are as under :

State	Sanctioned	Completed	Amount Spent
	Kms.	Kms.	(in crores)
Punjab	452.22	452.22	79.50
Rajasthan	1032.60	719.73	131.73
Assam	158.00	125.54	13.67
Meghalaya	231.00	170.71	24.67
West Bengal	507.00	356.18	64.25
Jammu and Kashmir	180.00	—	11.71

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Ban on Begging

2504. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHLE : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to impose ban on the practice of begging;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to formulate any concrete programme for them; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) to (c) A number of States and Union Territories have enacted legislation for beggary prevention. To supplement the State Government's efforts towards beggary prevention, the Central Government has a scheme for establishing Work Centres in beggar homes run by the State Government.

[English]

Elephant Habitats

2505. SHRI AYYANNA PATRUDU :
SHRIMATI SARADA TADIPARTHI :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether elephant habitats are endangered on account of human encroachments; and

(b) if so, the measures proposed to be taken to ensure that the elephants do not leave forest owing to encroachments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) Yes, Sir. Human encroachments are potential threats to the elephant habitats as they result in degradation and fragmentation of the habitats.

(b) The elephants sometimes leave the forests because of reasons other than encroachments. However, in order to counter the impact of encroachments as the cause of elephant movements out of the forests, the Central Government provides assistance to the State Governments for implementation of the following measures :

(i) Ecological restoration and protection of elephant habitats;

(ii) Extension, wherever possible, of elephant habitats adjoining National Parks and Sanctuaries;

(iii) Erection of elephant proof barriers at the interface between human habitations and elephant habitats;

(iv) Driving dis-oriented elephant herds back into the forests.

Deforestation in Assam

2506. SHRI DWARAKA NATH DAS : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that unplanned deforestation in Assam to feed paper mills would definitely cause the environmental hazard;

(b) if so, the measures taken by the Government to check such deforestation;

(c) whether the steps have also been taken so that paper mills in the region could depend on their own plantation of the bamboos; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) The Government of Assam has reported that no such report of unplanned deforestation in Assam for supply of raw materials to the existing paper mills has been received.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The existing paper mills have not yet launched any programme for captive plantation within the State except supply of seedlings/rhizomes to the local villagers.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Betal Farming

2507. SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the fact that almost 18 lakhs people in 27 districts of Bihar depend on the betel cultivation;